DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 236 658 CS 207 933

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TITLE Criteria for Evaluating Picture Story Books (CEPSB).
PUB DATE 80
NOTE 9p.; For related documents, see CS 207 904-945.
PUB TYPE Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Childrens Literature; *Evaluation Criteria; *Evaluation Methods; *Picture Books; *Reading Material Selection; Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS *The Research Instruments Project

ABSTRACT

Designed to provide teachers in early childhood education and other interested educators with criteria for evaluating the quality of plot, characterization, and style in picture story books, this instrument uses a set of eight criteria for evaluating these literary elements. Each criterion is followed by statements that illustrate different ways an author might fulfill a criterion. Evaluators indicate the degree to which authors have achieved the standard, then rate each criterion on a one to five scale. (This document is one of those reviewed in The Research Instruments Project (TRIP) monograph "Measures for Research and Evaluation in the English Language Arts, Volume 2," published by the Committee on Research of the National Council of Teachers of English in cooperation with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills. The TRIP review, included here as an introduction to the instrument, describes the instrument's category (literature), title, author, date, age range (postsecondary through adult), purpose, and physical characteristics.) (HTH)

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Criteria for Evaluating Picture Story Books (CEPSB).

The measurement instruments contained in this document have been reviewed in a monograph (cited below) edited by William T. Fagan, Charles Cooper, and Julie Jensen, for The Research Instruments Project (TRIP), and funded by a grant from the Trustees of the NCTE Research Foundation:

Measures for Research and Evaluation
in the
English Language Arts
Volume II

The purpose of the editors has been to select and review measurement instruments pertaining to all aspects of research and evaluation in the English language arts, e.g. language and language development, literacy, literature, reading (including comprehension, teacher-pupil interaction, etc.), writing, and teacher knowledge and attitudes. In order to make some of the actual instruments reviewed more readily available, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills (ERIC/RCS) has cooperated with the editors by processing selected instruments into the ERIC system (see the 42 documents assigned Clearinghouse accession numbers CS 207 904-945).

CS 207933

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Category: Literature

Title: Criteria for Evaluating Picture Story Books (CEPSB)

Author: Jeane Sword

Age Range: Post Secondary-Adult

Description of Instrument:

Purpose: To provide teachers in early childhood education, as well as other interested educators, with criteria for evaluating the quality of plot, characterization, and style in picture story books. This instrument makes no attempt to evaluate the illustrations of the picture story book.

Date of Construction: 1980

Physical Description: A set of eight criteria are used to evaluate the literary elements of plot, characterization, and style in picture story books. Each criterion is followed by statements that illustrate different ways an author might fulfill a criterion. The evaluator is to indicate the degree to which the author has successfully achieved the standard by placing a sign in front of each: a plus sign (+) indicates excellent; a check (✓) indicates satisfactory; and a minus sign (-) indicates minimal achievement of the criterion. The evaluator then rates each criterion on a 1 to 5 scale, with 1 indicating a low rating and 5 a high rating. Below is one criterion from the eight in CEPSB:

1. How well did the author achieve plot unification?

   Below are listed several ways in which to achieve plot unification. Indicate the degree to which this particular author successfully achieves that quality.

   _____ Beginning of story establishes conflict.
   _____ Middle of story presents plausible obstacles.
   _____ Middle of story presents rising action.
   _____ End of middle section has an identifiable climax.

_____ Ending is brief.
_____ Ending is satisfying.

Based on your responses to the above question, rate this book on plot unification on a 1-5 scale.

1 2 3 4 5
low high

Validity, Reliability, and Normative Data: CEPSB was content-validated by the ratings of three expert judges. These experts were university faculty who taught children's literature and who had published extensively in the field. The judges evaluated each criterion and recommended one of three courses: (a) to retain the criterion; (b) to delete the criterion; or (3) to change the criterion (sheets were attached for recommendations). All three judges recommended retention of the eight criteria in CEPSB.

Three early childhood and elementary education teachers and seven university students of children's literature used the instrument to rate a set of ten books; these ratings were then correlated. The interrater reliability of the instrument was statistically signficant as shown by Kendall Coefficient of Concordance, $\underline{W}$ (10,10)=.80,$p < .01$. The concurrent validity was also assessed by correlating the median student ratings for each book with this author's ratings as a criterion. The concurrent validity as indexed by Spearman Correlation Coefficient was $r_s(10)=.67, p < .05$.

Related Documents:

Sword, J. M. Factors related to kindergarten teachers' book selection (Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, 1979). Dissertation Abstracts International, 1980, 40, 5312-A.) Order No. 80009192.

Explanation of Term:

Picture Story Book: refers to a trade book that stresses the coordination and harmony of illustrations and text as differentiated from the picture book which stresses the illustrations with little or no text. The text of a picture story book allows for plot and character development.

A Set of Criteria for Evaluating Picture Story Books:

1. How well did the author achieve plot unification?

Below are listed several ways in which to achieve plot unification. Indicate the degree to which this particular author successfully achieves that quality.

_____ Beginning of story establishes conflict.
_____ Middle of story presents plausible obstacles.
_____ Middle of story presents rising action.
_____ End of middle section has an identifiable climax.
_____ Ending is brief.
_____ Ending is satisfying.

Based on your responses to the above question, rate this book on plot unification on a 1-5 scale.

1 2 3 4 5
low high

2. How well did the author achieve plot believability?

Below are listed several ways to achieve plot believability. Indicate the degree to which this particular author successfully achieves that quality.

_____ Events and their resolutions are plausible in the created world of the story.
_____ Action is motivated by the main characters.

_____ Conflict(s) arise(s) naturally out of interaction between character's personality and his situation.
_____ Conflict(s) is/are dealt with and resolved in a manner consistent with character's personality.
_____ Conflict is balanced in that the protagonist and antagonist are fairly well matched.
_____ Conflict(s) and interaction(s) are within the framework of the young child's understanding.
_____ Fantasy story has a cohesive framework of internal logic.

Based on your response to the above question, rate this book on plot believability on a 1-5 scale.

1 2 3 4 5
low high

3. How well did the author achieve an imaginative plot?

Below are listed several ways to achieve an imaginative plot. Indicate the degree to which this particular author successfully achieves that quality.

_____ Story concept is original as distinguished from imitative and contrived.
_____ Events are not completely predictable and thus demonstrate interesting turns of action.
_____ Solutions to conflict, while plausible and subtly prepared for, still provide an element of the unexpected.
_____ Familiar events take on new or unusual dimensions.

Based on your response to the above question, rate this book on imaginative plot on a 1-5 scale.

1 2 3 4 5
low high

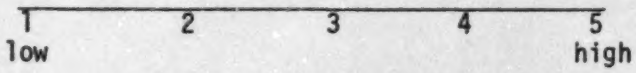
4. How well does the author succeed in portraying the main character?

Below are listed several ways to achieve character portrayal. Indicate the degree to which this particular author successfully achieves that quality.

_____ Character (whether animal, object, or person) possesses varied human traits.
_____ Character has individualized personality with both strengths and weaknesses.
_____ Character has universal characteristics with which a child may identify.

_____ Character is portrayed through his action.
_____ Character is portrayed through his dialogue.
_____ Character is conveyed through description.

Based on your response to the above question, rate this book on character portrayal on a 1-5 scale.

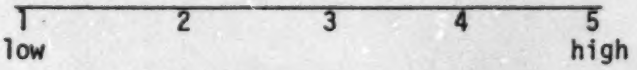


5. How well did the author succeed in creating a believable main character?

Below are listed several ways to achieve a believable main character. Indicate the degree to which this particular author successfully achieves that quality.

_____ Character's behavior is motivated by his individual personality rather than by the author's external manipulation.
_____ Situations that bring about character change are clear and convincing.
_____ Character's identity is made plausible in terms of place and time through appropriate language (for example, accurate colloqualism or dialect if used).
_____ Personified characters combine human behavior with some actions that arise naturally out of the nature of their species.
_____ Character possesses traits within the understanding of the young child.

Based on your responses to the above question, rate this book on believable characters on a 1-5 scale.



6. How well did the author use vivid imagery to invite sensory experience of the story?

Below are listed several ways to achieve vivid imagery. Indicate the degree to which this particular author successfully achieves that quality.

_____ A variety of sense impressions are conveyed through language: smell, taste, sound, touch, and sight.
_____ Visual imagery is vivid enough to allow the text to stand independently of the illustrations.

_____ Ordinary actions, objects, persons or places are made unusual by fresh figures of speech or description.
_____ Descriptive language is exact and concrete, making actions, objects, persons or places vivid and specific.
_____ Descriptive language is concise, avoiding excessive detail.

Based on your responses to the above question, rate this book on the use of vivid imagery to achieve a distinct and vital style on a 1-5 scale.

1 2 3 4 5
low high

7. How well did the author use aural techniques to achieve a distinct and vital style?

Below are listed several ways to achieve aural techniques to achieve a distinct and vital style. Indicate the degree to which this particular author successfully realized the achievement of that quality.

_____ Words or phrases are used that delight the child with their pleasing sounds and rhythms.
_____ Poetic techniques of language such as alliteration, assonance, and onomatopoeia provide the child with memorable words and phrases.
_____ Shapely and rhythmic phrases are made memorable and pleasing by judicious repetition.
_____ Repetition emphasizes and clarifies the meaning of the events taking place.
_____ Different sentence lengths vary the story's rhythms to match its content, thereby reinforcing the meaning of the events.
_____ Syntax of sentences adds to the aural delight and surprise of the story's language.

Based on your responses to the above question, rate this book on use of aural techniques to achieve a distinct and vital style on a 1-5 scale.

1 2 3 4 5
low high

8. How well did the author use style to establish and maintain mood appropriate to the situation, the events, and characters?

Below are listed several ways to achieve establishment and maintenance of mood. Indicate the degree to which this particular author successfully achieves that quality.

_____ Imagery contributes to mood.
_____ Sound and rhythmic patterns contribute to mood.
_____ Rich vocabulary contributes to mood.
_____ Humor (created through such devices as actions, situations, word choice, figurative language, selective detail, exaggeration) contributes to a happy mood or relieves a more serious one.

Based on your responses to the above question, rate this book on the establishment and maintenance of mood on a 1-5 scale.